

Appln. No. 10/678,484
Amdt. dated: June 27, 2005
Reply to Office Action dated April 4, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A phase delay line, comprising:
an RF transmission line;
a structure defining a fluid channel having a serpentine configuration coupled to said RF transmission line along at least a portion of a length of said transmission line, said serpentine configuration forming a plurality of fluid channel sections that are spaced apart from each other along a length of said RF transmission line and aligned generally transverse to a direction of signal propagation along said RF transmission line; and
at least one variable displacement fluid processor for changing a distribution of a fluidic dielectric within said fluid channel in response to a phase delay control signal;
wherein a phase delay of said transmission line is selectively varied by changing said distribution of said fluidic dielectric in said fluid channel.
2. (Original) The phase delay line according to claim 1 further comprising a second fluidic dielectric within said fluid channel, said first fluidic dielectric having at least one of a first permittivity and a first permeability that is different respectively from at least one of a second permittivity and a second permeability of said second fluidic dielectric; and wherein said at least one variable displacement fluid processor changes a distribution of said first and second fluidic dielectric relative to said transmission line.
3. (Original) The phase delay line according to claim 2 wherein said first and second fluidic dielectrics are immiscible.
4. (Original) The phase delay line according to claim 2 wherein said first and second fluidic dielectrics are separated by an immiscible fluid interface.

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Appln. No. 10/678,484
Amdt. dated: June 27, 2005
Reply to Office Action dated April 4, 2005

5. (Original) The phase delay line according to claim 3 wherein said fluid channel extends along a length of said transmission line and said distribution of said first and second fluidic dielectrics is varied along a length of said fluid channel.
6. (Original) The phase delay line according to claim 1 wherein said fluidic dielectric has a permeability and a permittivity selected for maintaining a constant characteristic impedance along an entire length of said RF transmission line.
7. (Original) The phase delay line according to claim 1 wherein said transmission line is also coupled to a solid dielectric substrate material.
8. (Original) The phase delay line according to claim 7 wherein said solid dielectric substrate is formed from a ceramic material.
9. (Original) The phase delay line according to claim 7 wherein said solid dielectric substrate is formed from a low temperature co-fired ceramic.
10. (Currently amended) A phase delay line, comprising:
an RF transmission line;
a structure defining a fluid channel having a serpentine configuration coupled to
said RF transmission line along at least a portion of a length of said transmission line;
and
at least one variable displacement fluid processor for changing a distribution of a
fluidic dielectric within said fluid channel in response to a phase delay control signal;
wherein a phase delay of said transmission line is selectively varied by changing
said distribution of said fluidic dielectric in said fluid channel, and ~~The phase delay line~~
~~according to claim 1 wherein~~ said variable displacement fluid processor comprises at
least one high volume pump for coarse adjustment of said distribution and one low
volume displacement pump for fine adjustment of said distribution.

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Appln. No. 10/678,484
Amdt. dated: June 27, 2005
Reply to Office Action dated April 4, 2005

11. (Original) The phase delay line according to claim 2 wherein said variable displacement fluid processor comprises at least one fluid conduit for communicating each of said first and second fluidic dielectrics to said fluid channel.
12. (Original) The phase delay line according to claim 11 further comprising a first fluid port communicating said first fluidic dielectric from said conduit to said fluid channel portion and a second fluid port communicating said second fluidic dielectric from a second conduit to said fluid channel portion, and an immiscible fluid interface separating said first and second fluidic dielectrics.
13. (Original) The phase delay line according to claim 1 wherein said fluidic dielectric is comprised of an industrial solvent.
14. (Original) The phase delay line according to claim 1 wherein at least one component of said fluidic dielectric is comprised of an industrial solvent that has a suspension of magnetic particles contained therein.
15. (Original) The phase delay line according to claim 14 wherein said magnetic particles are formed of a material selected from the group consisting of ferrite, metallic salts, and organo-metallic particles.
16. (Currently amended) A phase delay line, comprising:
an RF transmission line;
a structure defining a fluid channel having a serpentine configuration coupled to said RF transmission line along at least a portion of a length of said transmission line, said serpentine configuration forming a plurality of fluid channel sections that are spaced apart from each other along a length of said RF transmission line and aligned generally transverse to a direction of signal propagation along said RF transmission line; and
at least one variable displacement fluid processor for changing a distribution of a fluidic dielectric within said fluid channel in response to a phase delay control signal;
wherein a phase delay of said RF transmission line is maintained constant as an

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Appln. No. 10/678,484
Amdt. dated: June 27, 2005
Reply to Office Action dated April 4, 2005

operational frequency of said RF transmission line is varied, said phase delay maintained constant by changing said distribution of said fluidic dielectric in said fluid channel.

17. (Currently amended) A method for producing a phase delay for an RF signal comprising the steps of:

propagating said RF signal along an RF transmission line; and
positioning a fluidic dielectric within a fluid channel having a serpentine configuration, and forming with said serpentine configuration a plurality of fluid channel sections that are spaced apart from each other along a length of said RF transmission line and aligned generally transverse to a direction of signal propagation along said RF transmission line so that said fluid dielectric is and being coupled to said RF transmission line along at least a portion of a length of said transmission line, line; and
positioning said fluidic dielectric within said fluid channel being positioned to selectively control said coupling to vary a phase delay of said transmission line.

18. (Original) The method according to claim 17 further comprising the steps of:

positioning a second fluidic dielectric within said fluid channel, said first fluidic dielectric having at least one of a first permittivity and a first permeability that is different respectively from at least one of a second permittivity and a second permeability of said second fluidic dielectric; and

changing a distribution of said first and second fluidic dielectrics relative to said transmission line.

19. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 18 wherein said first and second fluidic dielectrics are immiscible.

20. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 18 wherein said first and second fluidic dielectrics are separated by an immiscible fluid interface

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Appln. No. 10/678,484
Amdt. dated: June 27, 2005
Reply to Office Action dated April 4, 2005

21. (Original) The method according to claim 20 wherein said fluid channel extends along a length of said transmission line and said distribution of said first and second fluidic dielectrics is varied along a length of said fluid channel.
22. (Original) The method according to claim 17 further comprising the step of also coupling said RF transmission line a solid dielectric substrate material.
23. (Original) The method according to claim 22 further comprising the step of forming said solid dielectric substrate from a ceramic material.
24. (Original) The method according to claim 22 further comprising the step of selecting a material for said solid dielectric substrate to be a low temperature co-fired ceramic.
25. (Original) The method according to claim 22 further comprising the step of selecting said fluidic dielectric to have at least one of a permittivity and a permeability that is different as compared to said solid dielectric substrate.
26. (Original) The method according to claim 17 further comprising the step of selecting said fluidic dielectric to have at least one of a permeability and a permittivity selected for maintaining a constant characteristic impedance along a length of said RF transmission line.
27. (Original) The method according to claim 17 further comprising the step of selecting a material for said fluidic dielectric to include an industrial solvent.
28. (Original) The method according to claim 17 further comprising the step of selecting a material of said fluidic dielectric to include an industrial solvent that has a suspension of magnetic particles contained therein.
29. (Original) The method according to claim 27 further comprising the step of selecting said magnetic particles from the group consisting of ferrite, metallic salts, and organo- metallic particles.

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Appln. No. 10/678,484
Amdt. dated: June 27, 2005
Reply to Office Action dated April 4, 2005

30. (Currently amended) A method for producing a phase delay for an RF signal comprising the steps of:

propagating said RF signal along an RF transmission line; and
positioning a fluidic dielectric within a fluid channel having a serpentine configuration;

forming with said serpentine configuration a plurality of fluid channel sections that are spaced apart from each other along a length of said RF transmission line and aligned generally transverse to a direction of signal propagation along said RF transmission line so that said fluid dielectric is and being coupled to said RF transmission line along at least a portion selected portions of a length of said transmission line, line, and

automatically varying a position of said fluidic dielectric among said plurality of fluid channel sections to being positioned to maintain a constant phase delay as an operational frequency of said RF transmission line is varied.